arrangement is provided within the chamber rotatably around a rotational axis and carries at least two members for holding a workpiece each, a rotation drive is provided to rotate said workpiece transport arrangement, and at least two displacement drives are provided for displacing said at least one workpiece each with respect to said transport arrangement whereby said members are selectively brought into a position aligned with one of said openings by rotation of said transport arrangement and from such position a workpiece is displaceable towards and from said opening by one of said displacement drives, and said member and said displacement drives are operatively mounted on said transport arrangement rotation drive, said displacement drive being arranged to control closing and opening of respective ones of said at least two openings.

Amend Claim 31 as follows:

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41 ~~31~~. (Twice amended) A vacuum chamber with at least two openings and a workpiece transport arrangement with which at least one workpiece within the chamber is selectively brought into a position adjacent to one of said openings, whereby the transport arrangement is provided within the chamber rotatably around a rotational axis and carries at least two members for holding a workpiece each, a rotation drive is provided to rotate said workpiece transport arrangement, and at least two displacement drives are provided for displacing said at least one workpiece each with respect to said transport arrangement whereby said

members are selectively brought into a position aligned with one of said openings by rotation of said transport arrangement and from such position a workpiece is displaceable towards and from said opening by one of said displacement drives in a direction with a radial component relative to said rotational axis, and said displacement drives are operable independently of each other so as to control closing and opening of said opening.

Add the following claims:

30 ~~58.~~ (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said closing is a sealing closing.

31 ~~59.~~ (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein, for processing at least one disk-shaped workpiece, said conveyors are configured to hold at least one of said workpieces with a predetermined positioning of a disk plane thereof, and said drive shaft arranged to move said conveyors in a direction which is non-parallel to said disk plane.

32 ~~60.~~ 31 (New) The apparatus of claim ~~59~~, wherein said direction is perpendicular to said disk plane.

33 ~~61.~~ (New) The chamber of claim 16, wherein said closing is a sealing closing.

34 ~~62.~~ (New) The chamber of claim 16, wherein, for processing at least one disk-shaped workpiece, said conveyors are configured to hold at least one of said workpieces with a predetermined positioning of a disk plane thereof, and said drive shaft arranged to move said conveyors in a

direction which is non-parallel to said disk plane.

35 ~~63.~~ 37 (New) The chamber of claim ~~62~~, wherein said direction is perpendicular to said disk plane.

37 64. 36 (New) The chamber of claim ~~30~~, wherein said members are arranged to perform the closing.

38 65. 36 (New) The chamber of claim 30, wherein the closing is a sealing closing.

39 66. (New) The chamber of claim ~~30~~, 36 wherein, for processing at least one disk-shaped workpiece, said members are configured to hold at least one of said workpieces with a predetermined positioning of a disk plane thereof, and said at least one disk-shaped workpiece is arranged to be displaceable by said displacement drive in a direction which is non-parallel to said disk plane.

40 ~~67.~~ 39 (New) The chamber of claim ~~66~~, wherein said direction is perpendicular to said disk plane.

42 ~~68.~~ 41 (New) The chamber of claim ~~31~~, wherein the closing is a sealing closing.

43 ~~69.~~ 41 (New) The chamber of claim ~~31~~, wherein, for processing at least one disk-shaped workpiece, wherein said members are configured to hold said at least one workpiece with a predetermined positioning of a disk plane thereof, and said at least one disk-shaped workpiece is arranged to be displaced in a direction which is non-parallel to said disk plane.

44 ~~70.~~ 41 (New) The chamber of claim ~~69~~, wherein said direction is perpendicular to said disk plane.

46 ~~71.~~ (New) The chamber of claim ~~32~~, 45 wherein the closing is a sealing closing.

47 ~~72.~~ 45 (New) The chamber of claim ~~32~~, wherein said at least one workpiece is a disk-shaped workpiece, and said at least one linear drive has a direction which is non-parallel to a plane of said disk-shaped workpiece.

48 ~~73.~~ (New) The chamber of claim ~~72~~, 47 wherein the direction is perpendicular to said plane.

49 ~~74.~~ 45 (New) The chamber of claim ~~32~~, wherein said at least one linear drive is encapsulated within said chamber.

51 ~~75.~~ 50 (New) The chamber of claim ~~33~~, wherein the closing is a sealing closing.

52 ~~76.~~ 50 (New) The chamber of claim ~~33~~, wherein said displacement drive is a linear drive.

53 ~~77.~~ 51 (New) The chamber of claim ~~33~~, wherein, for processing at least one disk-shaped workpiece, said member is configured to hold at least one of said workpieces with a predetermined positioning of a disk plane thereof, and said at least one disk-shaped workpiece is arranged to be displaceable by said displacement drive in a direction which is non-parallel to said disk plane.

54 ~~78.~~ 53 (New) The chamber of claim ~~77~~, herein said offset direction is perpendicular to said disk plane.

56 ~~79.~~ 55 (New) The method of claim ~~34~~, wherein the controlled closing is a sealing closing.

57 ~~80.~~ 55 (New) The method of claim ~~34~~, 55 wherein the closing and opening is performed by the conveyors.

58 81. 55 (New) The method of claim ~~34~~, 55 wherein the moving of the conveyors is in a linear direction.

59 82. 55 (New) The method of claim 34, 55 wherein the moving of the conveyors is effected, for processing at least one disk-shaped workpiece, in a direction which is non-parallel to said disc-shaped workpiece.

60 ~~83.~~ 55 (New) The method of claim ~~82~~, 55 wherein said direction is perpendicular to the plane.

REMARKS

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-17, 19-32, 34-38 and 53-57 as being unpatentable over Tateishi et al. in view of JP '727 is traversed. Reconsideration is requested on grounds that the rejection is based, not upon substantial record evidence, but upon impermissible hindsight.

In Tateishi et al., particularly with reference to Fig. 3, the transport arms 43 are independently mounted to the wall 31 and are thus absolutely passive, except for being spring-biased by the springs 47 towards the center of the space bordered by wall 31. The transport arms 43 have one single drive, as seen in Fig. 3, and that drive consists of the wedge 45 which is moved upwards and downwards axially. When it moves downwardly, the wedge urges all the arms 43 simultaneously outwards. When the wedge moves upwardly, it releases the arms 43 which are then moved inwardly by the action of their respective biasing springs 47. Thus, there are no drives that operate independently as called for by